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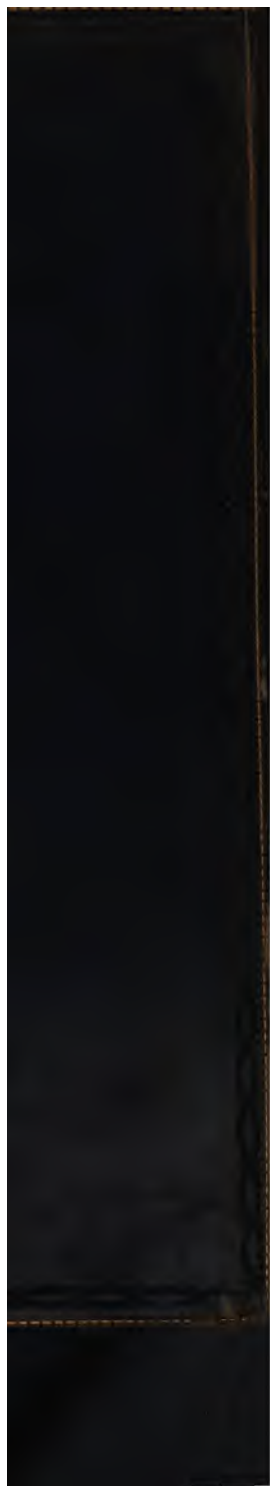
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ELEAZAR AND NAPHTALY.



ELEAZAR AND NAPHTALY,

AN

Hebrew Tale,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY

H. H. YOUNG.

London :

**JOSEPH JOHN LEATHWICK, 24, HART STREET,
BLOOMSBURY SQUARE.**



1827.

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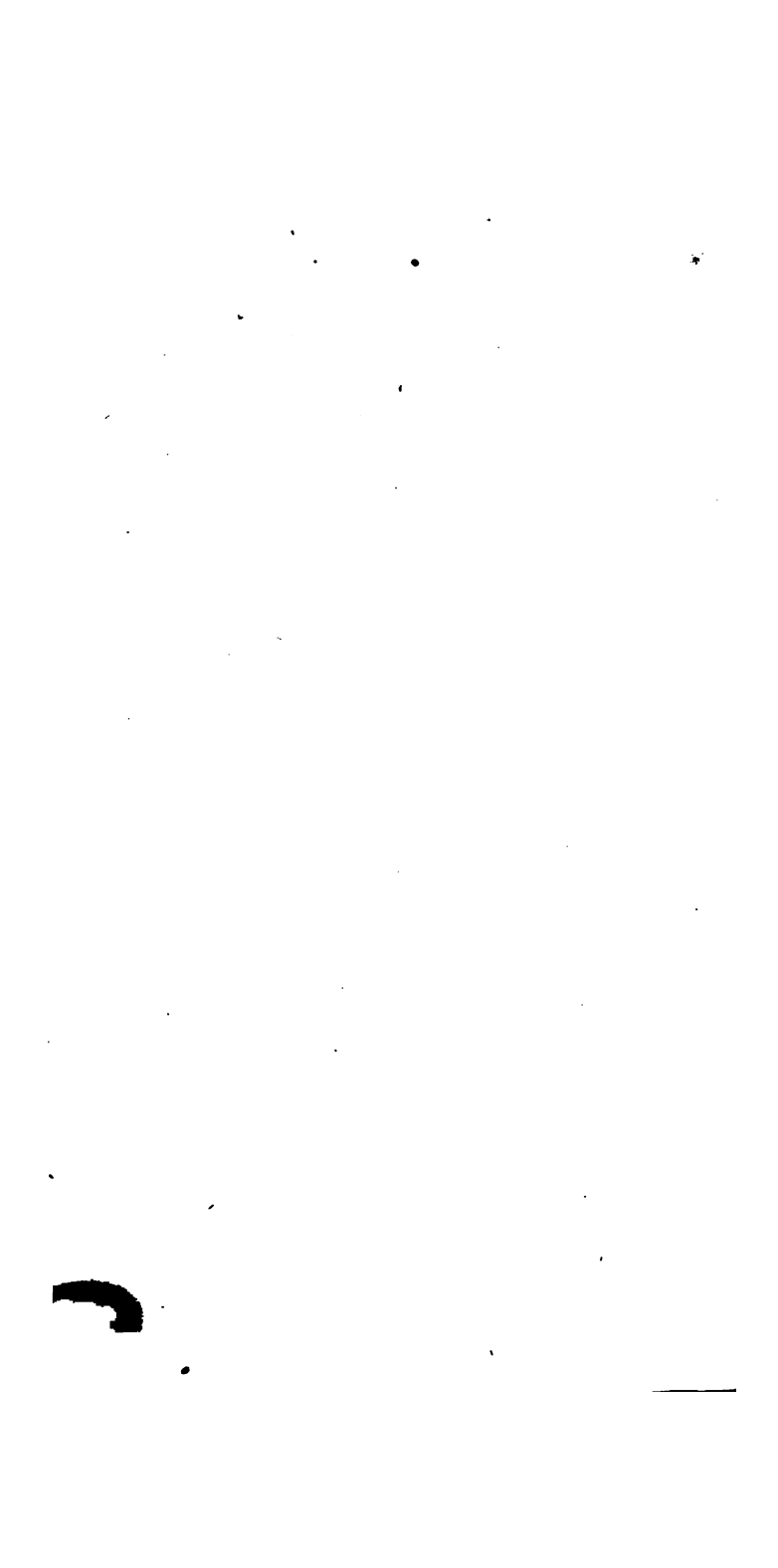
PREFACE.



DURING my travels some years ago in the ancient province of Avignon, I was desirous, in passing near the little city of Isle, of visiting the fountain of Vaucluse. On my return from that celebrated spot, somewhat early one morning, I perceived a young man and woman seated upon the grass, under the shade of two mulberry trees planted upon the bank of the Sorgue. The simplicity of their apparel announced neither riches nor poverty. The young man, without being handsome, had an engaging physiognomy; the young woman was tall and pretty, and her beauty was rendered the more striking by its foreign character. Her oval face, her large black eyes, bespoke at the same time dignity and misfortune. I stopped to observe her; she was lis-








ELEAZAR AND NAPHTALY.

nations, and our deeds have in consequence been more emblazoned by the pen of the historian. Your philosophers, whom I otherwise respect, have particularly dwelt upon our cruelties; I am aware of the motive; they make us the object of their ostensible hate, but the immediate cause of their hostility, is the origin of certain customs with whose introduction they reproach us. In striking at the Jews, they were aiming much higher. Their works have been read, and it has been repeated after them, that our annals are stained with blood; but they have not had the candour to add, that in those same annals, the most exquisite examples of justice and humanity are frequently to be found."


"Yes," I replied, "the episode of Joseph is a masterpiece of morality, of tenderness, and interest."

"Do you conceive that portion of our inspired history, alone deserves to



be commended?" said the young and pretty Jewess, who had not spoken until now. "I am willing, for an instant, to examine our writings with you, as if they were not sacred. Do you not experience some pleasure in the details of the patriarchal manners so finely described in the book of Genesis? Do you derive no gratification from reading a second time the hospitality of Abraham, the marriage of Rebecca, the meeting of Jacob and Rachel at the well from which he lifted off the stone, the seven years slavery to which he voluntarily submitted to obtain the object of his affections, and the other subsequent seven the better to deserve her? Do not the histories of Job, of Ruth, of Jonathan, of Tobit interest you? Do you not acknowledge the songs of Moses, of Debora, of David, and of Solomon, in our psalms and prophecies, to possess some beauties of eloquence and ge-

nus? Compare the Bible with the Alcoran, the Sadder, the Zend Avesta, (the very reading of which is barely supportable) and adopt, at least, the opinions of the fathers of your church, of your writers, and most celebrated poets, who, notwithstanding their hatred of our nation, think it their duty and glory to admire and study our writings, and very often to imitate them. But without fully discussing their merits, remember our laws. Open their code, perchance the only one whose commands have been obeyed three thousand years, and in every page you will find inculcated the precepts of humanity. I am not speaking of the Decalogue, beyond comparison the finest and most ancient monument of universal morality. I wish only to cite those laws which are much less known. ‘Protect and love,’ says Moses, ‘the unfortunate and those who are strangers, remembering that



‘ you yourselves were unfortunate and
‘ strangers in Egypt. When you reap
‘ and gather your grapes, leave always
‘ a portion of them, that your brothers,
‘ and they who have no fields nor
‘ vines, may reap and gather also.
‘ Once in every seven years give your
‘ harvest to the poor, and set your
‘ slaves at liberty. Cherish them and
‘ take care of them, for formerly ye
‘ also were in bondage. Honor the
‘ old man, and pay respect unto his
‘ grey hairs. Even, in an enemy’s
‘ country, destroy not the trees which
‘ give food to man: be careful, even
‘ of the cattle, for that which is not
‘ good enough for one man, is not
‘ good enough for his brothers. Let
‘ force compel him to give liberally,
‘ who derives no pleasure from acts of
‘ charity. Suffer not the murderer to
‘ redeem with money the blood which
‘ he has spilt. Let justice be equal
‘ among all. Let pity be so graft-


‘ ed in your hearts, that in taking even
‘ a bird’s nest, the Israelite may feel
‘ himself bound to let the mother at
‘ least escape.’*

“ Do these laws, taken from the books of Moses, which I cite word for word, appear to you inhuman? And when did we observe them? Whilst the nations of Europe were living on acorns in their woods. When Media and Persia were hardly civilized, and a few persons in Egypt alone could be found who knew how to read. Even, at that remote period, we lived under a government, which, for its simplicity, is still entitled to the respect of the wise. A people divided into tribes, forming but one family; each tribe having its council to watch over its welfare; a senate, composed of old men, chosen out of the different

* Exodus, xxiii. Leviticus, xix.
Deuteronomy, xxi.

councils, to discuss general interests in the name of the nation ; a supreme judge elected by the people whenever the state was in danger ; obedience and liberty were united and secured by a gradual hiërarchy, which was observed from ten men to an hundred, from an hundred to a thousand, and from the lowest Jew to the council of the elders, with a body of priests paid by the people, without the power of possessing any thing ; all Israel for soldiers, the laws for masters, the Almighty alone for King : such was our republic during a space of four hundred years. We afterwards wished to be governed by kings, and many of them reigned with glory. The name most celebrated, and most respected in the East, is that which one of our monarchs bore. Our ancient capital is still existing, and is sacred even in the eyes of our oppressors. Your libraries, at that time, were all compos-

ed of our writings. Where is the people whose laws, whose works, and whose name have so long outlived their ruin and defeat. We were conquered and dispersed by the Assyrians, and afterwards established over their immense country, where our industry soon rendered us rich and powerful; but we twice abandoned our habitations, our wealth, and the luxury of abundance, to return and dwell among the ruins of Jerusalem. Ah! if the love of country be the greatest of virtues, where is the nation in whom this love has existed more abundantly than in us? What people can boast an age more glorious than that in which Nehemiah and Esdras brought us back from the furthestmost parts of Persia, when, with the sword in one hand, the trowel in the other, in despite of our jealous neighbours, we rebuilt our ramparts and re-established our altars? From that time till Titus we never




ceased to fight for our liberty and independence. Success frequently crowned our efforts, and I doubt if Greece or Rome have produced greater or more perfect heroes, or men more useful to their country than the race of our Maccabees."

I listened to the pretty Jewess with the most respectful attention. Her beauty and emotion spread additional charms over her eloquence. "Madam," said I, "I am by no means the enemy of the Jews. I am neither an Amalekite nor a Philistine. On the contrary, I am perfectly convinced of the truth of your excellent observations; nevertheless, since your dispersion, it is possible your common people have conducted themselves in a manner not to deserve the benevolence of other nations."

"Other nations," she exclaimed, fixing on me her large black eyes, "must be glad, for their honors' sake, to bury in

complete oblivion all recollection of their conduct to the unfortunate Jews. Since the taking of Jerusalem by the celebrated Titus, who, although surnamed, and doubtless with reason, the Delight of Mankind, nevertheless exercised dreadful cruelties on the Jewish prisoners (a circumstance somewhat remarkable in the good emperor, especially when we remember that his mistress was a Jewess) since, I say, the dreadful state in which the Romans left Judea, the most ardent imagination cannot form an idea of the miseries our people have undergone. Hadrian, in particular; Hadrian, a man whose name is indisputably associated with many glorious recollections, carried his barbarity against us to a height that would make the most inhuman savage tremble. His successors persecuted us for being Christians; and when Rome embraced Christianity, her emperors persecuted us for being



Jews. The barbarian kings, who rose from the ruins of that empire, made it a point of religion to shed our blood. Wherever your crusaders passed, they made us their victims, and stripped us and put us to death. Your Pastoureaux, your Flagellants, and all your fanatics, during fifteen centuries, really considered the killing of Jews as praiseworthy. Your magistrates, your popes and kings, sometimes under the ridiculous pretences of our practising witchcraft, of our poisoning the waters, of our crucifying children, of our piercing the host, delivered our best men to the executioner, confiscated our riches, drove us from one country to another, then recalled us, exacting enormous ransoms, which they had no sooner received than they banished us again, in order to despoil us a second time. Notwithstanding we have ever been the continual sport and the never failing victims of the


people, priests, and kings of every country, not all these united calamities have been able to make us swerve from our moral or religious duties, or even change our name, the sole pretext for so much barbarity. This constancy, during two thousand years of misfortune, is surely worthy of some consideration, and if a small number of wretched Jews do dishonor themselves by usury, meanness, and disgraceful covetousness, the wise man ought to reflect, that the certain way to render despicable is to despise, to consider that our vices are the offspring of this continual contempt, and that it is a matter of just astonishment, that the greatest portion of our nation should have preserved any virtue in the midst of the wretched contumely, the undisguised temptation, and the terrors to which they have ever been subjected."

At the very moment I was prepar-

ing a most energetic reply to the severe charges the Jewess had ventured to bring against the Christians, and to prove that we had always been the most just and the best people in the world, we arrived at the gates of the town. The young man observing me looking around, as if in search of an object, and suspecting perhaps my desire of refreshment, said politely to me, "My wife, Esther, who has just been pleading the cause of her country, (somewhat warmly I admit) has forgotten to tell you, that among the virtues we cherish, hospitality is accounted one of the first, and we should be most happy if you would allow us to exercise it to-day. Do us, therefore, the honor to accompany us and partake our dinner, and we will endeavour to give you something more than unleavened bread." I thanked him for his politeness, and without further invitation accepted his kind offer.

His house was at no great distance; it was small, neat, compact and newly built upon the old ramparts, whose thick trees overshadowed it. As I was examining this charming retreat, I discovered on one side a part of a wall in ruins. "I am surprised," said I to Mr. Jonathas (the name of my polite companion) "that in so pretty a house, you should leave that side in ruins." "It is our custom," he replied, "since the destruction of the temple, the house of every Israelite ought, in some place, to recal the devastation of the holy city. If you understand our language, you would be able to read, on the fragments of that wall, these words, taken from the finest of our Psalms: 'Let me forget myself, rather than thee, O Jerusalem.'"

On entering the house, I was struck with the simplicity and neatness that pervaded every part of it. The walls were covered with a handsome paper,




but totally divested of any extraneous ornaments of paintings and sculpture; the furniture was stained wood and the chairs morocco. Mr. Jonathas had six children, four boys and two girls, the eldest of whom was but eight years old. As soon as they beheld their mother, they sprang forward to receive their customary embraces, then knelt before their father who blessed them, kissed them, and sent them back to the garden. "These exterior marks of filial respect, too great perhaps in your eyes, seem to surprise you;" said he to me, "but we have always thought it necessary, in our nation, to keep them up, for our laws are a great restraint on parental authority; and the more they have circumscribed, the more our manners have extended it."

Whilst he was thus speaking, two Catholic servants, who composed all his household, laid the cloth and prepared the dinner. His wife employed

herself in superintending the preparation of the meats, dressed with all due observance to that Mosaic law, which forbids the eating of rabbits, pork, hares, the fat of oxen, or of lambs, or milk, and meat during the same repast, and commands the animal to be killed in such a manner as not to leave a single drop of blood remaining; in short to see a number of customs adhered to for which their cooks are obliged to consult a sort of formulary.

I did not dare express my opinion of all these tiresome customs to Mr. Jonathas: I was apprehensive of his wife's returning, nor indeed was it long before she entered followed by her children. Dinner was brought in, we washed our hands, and Mr. Jonathas recited a Psalm. He then took a whole loaf, and blessing it, broke it, and offered each of us a portion. All these ceremonies being at length com-



pleted, I recommenced the conversation.

“How many Jews do you imagine there may be dispersed,” said I, “over the world.” That is not easy to calculate,” he replied, “for if it be a difficult matter to ascertain the exact number of the inhabitants of a single empire, judge then the difficulty of numbering a people scattered over the four quarters of the globe, and concealing themselves in every corner of it; but if the great number of Jews, established in Europe, were added to the prodigious list of those who reside in Asia, from Constantinople to Peking, and to those who inhabit the coasts of Africa, and certain countries of America, I think the calculation would surely exceed four millions. You appear surprised, but you would cease to be so, were you acquainted with our laws and customs.

“These laws command us to marry

THEY ARE THE ONLY VIEWS OF AGE.
 THAT ARE WITH US NOT A WIFE BY
 THE TIME I REACHED UPON AS LIVING IN
 ALL THE WESTERN IN THE EAST HAVE
 SEVERAL TIMES AND THE POWER OF DI-
 VORCE IS FULLY WHEN PERMITTED.
 THESE ARE THE REASONS WHICH ACCOUNT
 FOR THE IMMENSITY OF OUR POPULATION;
 AND IT IS THE THAT GENERALLY SPEAKING
 WE ARE SOBER, LABORIOUS, AND CHASTE;
 THAT THE NOBILITY OF THE MARRIAGE VOW
 IS BY NO PEOPLE SO MUCH RESPECTED AS
 BY US. THAT WE HAVE NO SOLDIERS; AND
 THAT OUR NATION IS, PERHAPS, THE ONLY
 ONE IN EUROPE EXEMPT FROM THOSE TWO
 SCOURGES THAT DESOLATE MANKIND, DE-
 BAUCHERY AND WAR.

“ Were it not for these laws and
 customs, after the persecutions we
 have undergone in every country, and
 the incalculable number of our people
 who have been put to death, our race
 would assuredly have been extinct.
 These persecutions have united us

the more, and served to cement the bonds of our friendship. Brothers may separate in prosperity, but adversity will soon re-unite them. When we were in Palestine under our kings and high priests, we quarrelled among ourselves, disregarded our laws, and erected temples to idols. Since we have lost our priests, our temple, and our country, and have been obliged to expose ourselves to the pain of death in order to obey our God, we have been more faithful to Him, and have remembered more carefully, that He commands us to love one another. Alas! that is our only consolation. Strangers in every country, incapable of any employment, and taking no part in public affairs; the only ambition which is permitted us, the only pleasures which are left us, are to be good husbands, good fathers, to assemble together, to concentrate all sorts of happiness in our domestic felicity;

XXV. PREFACE.

to seek for and to find in OUR OWN
HEARTS these comforts and consolations, which the whole world refuses
to give. The source of these consolations consists
in the practice of the sublime
virtue of being charitable. Your
charitable efforts are often over-run
by the poor, but rarely has a Jew
been seen begging his bread. In
1841, our benevolent number admits
that we have a general fund for as-
sisting our poor brethren. This fund
is never exhausted, and the manner of
its being kept up is still a secret even
among ourselves. Your laws forbid
our possessing landed property, yet we
are tolerably rich, and the origin of
our fortunes is not in usury, as has
been too often reported, but in acti-
vity, in the love of industry, in the
necessity of living with fewer means
than other people, in the knowledge
that we are, which seems to be the

birthright of the Jews; in that knowledge, which, during the dark ages of barbarism, taught us to invent letters of exchange, made us the factors of the universe over which we were dispersed, and which contributed more, than is generally supposed, to form the first links of that chain which has united all the nations of Europe. Thus we owe our riches to oppression, and also, in some measure, our population and spirit of benevolence."

"But," said I, "these persecutions are in fact very much diminished, and in some countries you enjoy all the rights of citizens."

"In Pologne," he replied, "and in some parts of Italy we are left tolerably quiet. In England, and especially in Holland, we are more than tolerated. We there follow our religion publicly; we have our synagogues where our Rabbies, who are the true doctors of our law, exhort us

to virtue and chastity, remonstrate with them who break the sabbath, conclude our marriages, pronounce divorces, and in short explain our law. This explication requires not only a profound knowledge of the books of Moses, but of the Talmud, a work exceedingly esteemed among us, because it is the assemblage of all the opinions and traditions which compose our oral law. We look upon those men as learned, whose principal study is the Talmud, which is now become, if I may so express it, the civil and canonic code of the Jews. It is not for me to appreciate the merit of that science before a Christian. Unfortunately for us we have hardly any other, except some few authors, who have applied themselves to astronomy, to grammar, and to physic, the rest have only written upon controversy. Our literature is but trifling, and your taste would be but little sa-

tisfied with a Jewish library. Yet we have had some celebrated academies, and we have schools still in the cities where we have been permitted to build synagogues. In those, where we are not allowed to have them, we meet together in a room hired at our joint expense, where the whole furniture consists in a few benches, a table, and a closet at the eastern end. This closet, which so humbly represents the Ark of Shittim wood, covered with scales of gold, contains the five books of Moses, written upon parchment with ink made on purpose. They are not bound as other books are, but copied on long skins, sewn end to end, not with thread, but with the sinews of a pure animal. These skins are rolled upon two sticks, and covered over with a rich veil, embroidered by the most skilful hands. In our meetings, the honor of carrying this book from the closet, where it is kept, to the table,

upon which it is placed whilst fragments of it are being read, is purchased, and the money given to the poor. The men seated upon benches, and the women in a gallery surrounded by curtains, assist at the reading of it and sing our Jewish psalms. This is all that we have remaining of the famous temple of Solomon."

"Is it there," said I, "that you celebrate your feasts?" "Our feasts ought," he replied, "to be celebrated only at Jerusalem; however, we keep up a feeble resemblance of them, according to our particular calendars which we carefully renew every year. Independently of the sabbath, our feasts are numerous, and each refers, more or less, immediately to the great epochs of our history; for instance, the Purim, for the deliverance of the Jews by Esther; the Hanucca, for the victories of our Maccabees, and a great many others, among which your

feelings would assuredly be awakened, by that which we denominate the Quipour, or the expiation. It is celebrated on the same day that Moses came down from the mountain with the last tables of the law, after having obtained pardon for the worshipping of the golden calf. Formerly it was the only day on which the high priest entered the Holy of Holies, to proclaim our regrets, our repentance, and the lamentations of a too often prevaricating people. The whole of the day is passed in the most austere fasting; we go to the synagogue at day break and remain there till night, dressed in mourning with our hair and beards in disorder. There we exclaim—O my God, have mercy upon us! We have sinned, we have done evil, we are justly punished! Have mercy upon us, God of goodness!-- Every one confesses those acts with which he has to reproach himself, and

implores the forgiveness of his brethren and of his Maker. All discord is buried in oblivion, and our grievances and foolish animosities forgotten; every one shews contrition by the most sincere repentance, and we embrace in tears. The spectacle of a number of persons lamenting their errors together, and praying devoutly for their return to virtue, perchance exists not in any other religion, and would strike you, whilst beholding it, with wonder and compassion.

“Excuse these long details, I beseech you, I have told you more concerning the Jews than you perchance desired to know, but I was prepossessed with your appearance; and the last reflection that strikes us, when we are speaking of ourselves to such a person as you seem to be, is the fear of importuning him.”

I assured Mr. Jonathas, that on the contrary I felt thankful for the infor-

mation he had given me, and emboldened by his generous politeness, asked him the subject of the manuscript he had been reading in the morning. Madam Esther replied, "It is a poem my father left me when he died, and has been in our family upwards of ten generations. The name of the author is unknown. My father, who was a learned Rabbi, thought it had been composed by a Rechabite, who had retired on the other side of the Jordan, after the unfortunate Jerusalem was beseiged by the Romans, and torn to pieces by intestine factions. This opinion is somewhat verified, for the author, at the beginning of the poem, addresses himself to the children of Zelpha, that is, to the inhabitants of the ancient tribe of Gad. However it may be, we often read it, because we find a picture of those virtues pourtrayed, which it is our desire to put in practice. It would interest

you, if you understood Hebrew, at least it would prove to you, that there are some Jewish books whose pages are not written in blood."

Mr. Jonathas added, that he was employed in translating it into French, and he offered, as soon as he had finished, to let me read his translation. I accepted his kindness with gratitude, and shortly afterwards, with feelings of deep regret, took my leave of that amiable and virtuous family.

Three years subsequent to this adventure I received the translation of the Jewish poem, together with a letter from Mr. Jonathas, informing me that they were about to leave the Province of Avignon, then agitated by great disorders, to establish themselves at Cairo; he likewise made me a present of the poem, and left me at liberty to make use of it in any manner my inclination might suggest. As soon as I had read it, I fancied it

might be able to interest the little number of the idle, who are not above reading an innocent and moral book. I corrected, as well as I could, the faults that had escaped Mr. Jonathas, in a language that was foreign to him, and taking advantage of his permission, got it printed. Should it not succeed, my disappointment shall be kept from Mr. Jonathas, but should my hopes be realized, I will certainly send him an account of it to Cairo.



ELEAZAR AND NAPHTALY.



BOOK I.

CHILDREN of Zelpha, ye, who bewail our fatal discords before the Lord; ye, who alone in Israel, have not yet forgotten, that we are a people of brothers—assemble around me. Come, family, alas! but small, come into the beautiful valley which Mount Gilead overlooks. There, under the shade of the old cedars, leaning against the rocks where our fathers have often leaned, we will talk of their happiness, we will talk above all of their virtue. Let us recal those happy ages, when the tribes, assembled in one body, worshipped the God of armies, divided among themselves the fruits of the earth, and having learnt in the desert to support the cruel evils which nature inflicts upon mankind, diminished, in some measure, the weight of those great calamities by friendship, union,

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and brotherly love. Ah! let us relume the memory of those manners so simple and affecting, that the old man whilst hearing me, may pride himself on being born less distant from those peaceable times than ourselves; that the heart of the young man may be animated by the lively idea of imitating his ancestors, and that the child, seated on its mother's knee, may smile at the delightful picture which pleases him, though he understand it not.

In the days which followed the death of Joshua, Israel had no chief: the tribes established in their conquests, and satisfied with the portion of land which fate had assigned them, thought only of enjoying the kindness of Providence. The victorious spears and swords were converted into instruments of agriculture, the courser which had pursued the Amorrhean in the plains of Gabaon, now dragged the plough slowly along, and every Israelite at peace with himself, his brethren and his God, reposed quietly under his vine or his figtree.

The holy ark was at Silo, nor was it yet enclosed in the magnificent temple that was destined for it. A simple covering of skins afforded shelter to the tabernacle. Rarely

did the blood of goats redden the altar of sacrifices; rarely did the incense of Tadmor burn upon the altar of perfumes, but the respect and the veneration of a whole people, the purity of the high priest, the fervor and innocence of the prayers which were offered up to the Most High, rendered this abode dearer to Him than the magnificent temple so many times profaned in Sion.

There, all the tribes of Israel assembled at our principal feasts. There, fathers of families, followed by their numerous children, went to adore their Lord, spend Easter among their brethren, and renew the oath of the divine alliance: the mothers shewed each other their children, and embraced in token of congratulation; the husbands interrupted each other to talk of their wives. The elders proclaimed the laws given to Moses on the mountain; the trumpet called before them the weak, the orphans, and those who had to complain of fraud or violence, and no one complaining, the elders worshipped the Lord.

The grandson of Eleazar, the venerable Sadoc, filled the place of Aaron. Sadoc was beloved by God, because Sadoc loved man-

kind. He observed, with enthusiastic zeal, all the precepts of the law, and prayed with fervor and tenderness for those who did not observe them. During the forty years which he had been high priest, the widow in tears, the forsaken child, and all the unfortunate in Israel, had found in him a father and protector; and, when animated by his words, his attention, and his assistance, they kissed his hands and bathed them with their tears, and were amazed at finding him so good—"God only is good," said Sadoc to them, "the good which is done proceeds from Him alone."

The wife of Sadoc had ceased to exist, and had left twin sons. Eleazar and Naph-taly, hardly nineteen years old, were an example to, and the admiration of all Israel. Amiable as Benjamin, handsome and virtuous as Joseph, when they accompanied the high priest in their white dresses, and presented to him at the altar the unleavened bread or the incense, the people fancied, as they beheld the father and his sons, that they saw Abraham among the angels; and when, after sun-set, they walked round the city and amused themselves with lifting off

the heavy stones, which covered the cisterns, in order to give water to the flocks returning from the fields, the young women, as they saluted them, could not refrain from blushing, and arriving pensively at their homes, they would make their mothers relate the history of Jacob's having taken for his wife that Rebecca whose flock he had watered.

Eleazar and Naphtaly were strangers to love; their innocent bosoms were satisfied with the sincere and tender friendship which animated them—that friendship which had so many charms for them, and which was so necessary to their existence, had no beginning, they had always felt it, they had no need of thinking of it, they enjoyed it as their very life. Their hearts were so united and resembled each other so much, that it were difficult to mark, without carefully examining them, the one which had first formed a desire. Together at day break, the day break following found them still together; yet, they had not been looking for each other. The name of brother, which they loved so well, added nothing to their real names. Eleazar without Naphtaly,

Naphtaly without Eleazar presented to their minds the idea of inanity.

There were, however, some shades, though hardly perceptible, which distinguished their characters. Eleazar, not less affectionate, not less tender than Naphtaly, was naturally more grave and serious. Meditation and prayer possessed charms for him. He was pleased with the conversation of old men, with the study of the sacred writings and religious ceremonies. His mind, ripe at an early age, cherished peace and reflection; his pious and tranquil disposition had need of repose. Naphtaly, more impetuous, but as innocent as his brother, loved virtue as well, though without contemplating its beauties as much; his heart, alive to the passions, longed to experience their effects; to suffer was less painful to him, than not to glow with some emotion. But the wisdom of Eleazar tempered the ardour of Naphtaly; the sensibility of Naphtaly made Eleazar more indulgent. Thus, though born with different sentiments, their affection served to communicate them; they exchanged them without losing them, and each enjoyed the qualities of both. O delightful privilege of

Friendship, which not only augments our pleasures, but increases even our virtue !

Naphtaly long exercised in the war-like games of the Jews, could pierce with his arrow the bird skimming through the air. No one in Ephraim could dispute the prize of strength and dexterity with him. He loved to cover himself with a leopard's skin, to gird his loins with an hempen cord, and without providing himself with other provision than a little vase of milk, his bow in his hand, his quiver over his shoulder, to penetrate into the desert, pursue the hind and the antelope, attack the terrible lion, and return with his spoils. Eleazar, less strong, less skillful, took no other pleasure in the chase than that it pleased his brother ; yet he accompanied him in his long courses, and even enjoyed them, because he was with Naphtaly ; and when, in his turn, Eleazar would go and pray in the tabernacle from sunrise till sunset, Naphtaly would go with him, and remain and pray by his side and forget the chase, because he was with Eleazar.

One day as they were running together over the burning rocks of Remnon, followed

by their young friends, Naphtaly hurried on in the pursuit of a panther, lost his way, and leaving Eleazar and his companions far behind him, soon passed beyond the boundary of those lands with which he was acquainted. Led astray farther and farther by the animal, which he had previously wounded, he ran and darted into the midst of the rocks, and could no longer retrace his footsteps. Uneasy, not at his own danger, but at the anxiety his brother would experience, he hastened and crossed the dried beds of the torrents, then ascended the top of the mountain, and all that he saw served only to bewilder him the more. His cries were lost in the air, the burning disk of the sun enveloped him in its light, and scorched him with its rays: his fatigued eyes perceived nothing around him but naked crags, and over his head he beheld a ball of fire. All nature was in repose, every thing wore an aspect of melancholy and seemed overpowered by the orb of noon. Time passed away, the heat increased, Naphtaly redoubled his efforts, and already began to feel the torments of that dreadful thirst, which, in those climates, is able alone to bring on sudden death.

Exhausted and almost breathless, he walked forward leaning on his bow ; he lifted up his heavy head, and his eye-lid sank before the fiery rays of the sun. His thirst became more painful, it overcame him and devoured him. He seized the vase that was suspended round his neck—that vase, his only hope, and which could alone restore him to life. He was about to put it to his lips when he heard the sound of shrieks behind him, at the same moment he beheld a young Jewess with her arms uplifted, her hair dishevelled and scattered over her veil. She approached, fell on her knees and exclaimed “ I am dying, I am dying, some water, for pity’s sake, give me some water !”

Scarcely had she uttered these words before the vase was at her lips ; she drank with avidity, without rising from the ground, without taking her eyes from the beverage which restored her exhausted strength. Naphtaly, as he stood beside her, contemplated her features, her grace, her expressive eyes shaded by her jet black eyebrows, her forehead whiter than alabaster, whose brilliancy formed so great a contrast with her long black hair, and with her cheeks

over which the heat had spread a crimson hue.

The contemplation of her angelic form bereft Naphtaly of the sentiment of his own sufferings; he experienced a secret charm, mingled with a lively and pleasing sensation. The attraction, the new enchantment which penetrated and filled his soul, suspended all his faculties, and banished every thought. Delighted at having saved the days of the fair stranger, he forgot himself, his eyes were rivetted on her and he no longer felt his own misfortune: like the paralyzed man, whom a sudden and unexpected danger forces to fly, he forgot all recollection of his own sorrow, while beholding the helpless beauty of another.

Having emptied the vase, the Jewess looked up and fixed her eyes full of gentleness upon her deliverer; then rising, she said, "Oh! my benefactor, learn how much I am indebted to you. This morning, whilst conducting my father's sheep to the pastures, which extend to the foot of the mountain, a troop of armed men, the cruel Moabites appeared on a sudden before me; the Lord heard the prayer which I offered up to

Him, and I escaped and gained these rugged rocks, where I have been wandering ever since the break of day without any food, without a single drop of water to re-animate my drooping frame. You have restored me to life again—Ah! come, come to my father's home; we will kill a lamb, we will invite all our family, and they shall salute you by the gentle name my heart already gives you. I will conduct you—come, if not to enjoy your own good action, at least to let us enjoy our gratitude.”

She spoke, and Naphtaly, whose looks were fixed upon her, whose ears had not lost a single syllable, felt with encreasing violence the devouring thirst that was consuming him. He wished, he wanted to reply, but his mouth remained half open and his tongue became fixed to his palate. At that moment the veil of the young Jewess, which was floating in disorder around her head, detached itself and fell at her feet. Naphtaly stooped to restore it, but hardly had he taken it in his trembling hand, when he tottered, fell down, and remained stretched upon the ground incapable of speech or motion.

Struck with surprise and terror the Jewess looked at him, and discovered that he had fallen by the same cause, which, a few minutes before, had so nearly destroyed her, and that she alone had been the occasion of his death she uttered a lamentable cry, and unable to find any assistance but in the house of her father, she ran off with the swiftness of the stag and flew down the mountain.

During this time the unhappy Eleazar was searching the adjacent country. His companions dispersed, by his command, visited every cavern. Eleazar upon the summit of the rocks, looked around him with an eager eye and with a sorrowful voice, interrupted the prayers which he addressed to the Almighty, to cry out, at almost every instant, Naphtaly! my dear Naphtaly! Then motionless and distracted, with his arms uplifted, he would listen as if he expected the Almighty were about to answer his prayer, but the echo of the mountains alone replied to him—Naphtaly! my dear Naphtaly! and his hand sunk upon his bosom, and the tears trickled down his cheeks.

At length, a few moments after the departure of the young Jewess, Eleazar arrived at the foot of the mountain where Naphtaly lay deprived of sense, holding in his clasped hand the veil he had picked up. At that sight Eleazar rent his clothes, threw himself upon his brother's body, then took him in his arms, pressed him against his heart, kissed him, and bathed him with tears. He soon discovered that he was not wounded, and assembling his companions, they collected, in the same vase, the little milk which each possessed, and gently poured that re-animating drink between the pale parched lips of the unfortunate Naphtaly. Naphtaly opened his languid eyes, which seemed to wander around in search of the fair stranger. Overcome by the effort, he reclosed them immediately; but his hand, notwithstanding his feebleness, placed the veil, which he still held, upon his heart. Eleazar and his friends made him a bed with their arms, then raising him with the greatest care, and guided by a shepherd of the mountains they retraced their steps to Silo.

Oh ! how dreadful was the grief of Sadoc when he beheld his dying son. In vain did

the affectionate Eleazar, dissembling his own fears, hasten to console him, and assure him of the life of his brother. The old man, motionless and downcast, raised his eyes towards Heaven, without yet venturing to complain to his Maker of a misfortune he could hardly support.

Every aid that could be thought of had already been lavished upon Naphtaly. Placed upon a bed of soft skins and re-animated by some drops of the delicious wine of Engedi, the young Hebrew came to himself again, his eyes recognized his father, and he raised his arms to embrace him. Eleazar on his knees at the bed side, supported with one hand his brother's drooping head, and with the other presented him restoring medicines. Sadoc looked at them and wept, and the people of Silo collected before the house, expressed their love and their anxiety for the unfortunate Naphtaly by their general lamentations.

The day after this mournful event was the sixth of the month of Sivan, the fifth after Easter. It was the fiftieth day after the coming out of Egypt, when the Almighty himself condescended, upon Mount Sinai, to give

laws to his chosen people. The remembrance of this is kept sacred. The high priest, assisted by the Levites, presents in the name of the children of Jacob two leavened loaves of new barley, the first fruits of the harvest, and offers up in sacrifice two young bulls, a ram, seven spotless lambs as purifying victims, and the male of the wild goat to expiate the errors of a too disobedient people. After this sacrifice of gratitude, every family meets together to rejoice; every Israelite opens his house to his brethren of the other tribes. This children of Jacob, this fast day, are entirely occupied in strengthening the ties of affectionate fraternity.

Sadoc, after having fulfilled the holy duties of his office, returned to shut himself up with his son. The pious Eleazar had refused to leave Naphtaly even to assist at the sacrifice. However, when night arrived, and soothing sleep had closed the eyelids of Naphtaly, Eleazar ran to the tabernacle. There, his forehead in the dust, and stretching out his hands to the edge of the veil, which covered the Holy of Holies, he remained for some time in deep meditation, for he was praying for his brother.

The morn had already dawned, and the seven lamps of the golden candlestick gave but a glimmering light, when Eleazar rose to return to Naphtaly. As he was retiring from the second circle, he was suddenly stopped by a young Jewess, who had two doves in one hand and was leading a white lamb with the other. Uneasiness and grief were painted on every feature. A blush of modesty suffused itself over her countenance where grace, chastity, and piety united seemed to reign. With looks fixed on the ground, she approached the admiring Eleazar, and addressed the following words to him :—"Forgive, O Levite of the Lord, forgive a stranger for detaining you a moment. Although unknown in Silo, I am one of the faithful. My name is Rachel, and, I live in Benjamin, in the hamlet of Luza. My father, Abdias, worships the God of Isaac. I am come to offer up to the Almighty this lamb and these two doves, the only riches which the daughter of a shepherd possesses. Will you condescend, Son of Aaron, to sacrifice them for me upon the altar, and to solicit of the Most High the favor which I require of Him?"

She ceased. Eleazar looked at her without being able to reply: his heart was too much affected by the accents of her voice. Struck with admiration, and burning with a sentiment unknown to him, he experienced an inexpressible trouble which disturbed and yet delighted him—he felt—he suffered torments, and found them already full of charms.

At length, holding out his trembling hand to the modest Rachel, he said, “ Daughter of Abdias, come and assist at your sacrifice; your presence will render it the more pure. I will sacrifice your victims, and will offer up your gifts myself; but, in order that my fervent prayers may be joined to yours, tell me, confidently, what is the favor you desire of the Lord.”

Again Rachel blushed, and again her eyes were cast upon the ground. “ Son of Levi,” she replied, “ I ought not, and will not conceal the virtuous sentiment that animates my bosom. I am come to pray to the Most High for the man who saved my life. I am unable to assist him myself, and his days are in danger. May the Almighty turn upon me the misery he is now suffering! That is my prayer, that my desire, and that

the object of my sacrifice. Gratitude with which Heaven inspires the generous mind may assuredly be confessed in so holy a place as this is."

As she pronounced these words, the eyes of the pathetic Rachel were filled with tears, and Eleazar perceived his own beginning to flow. He returned to the sanctuary, washed his hands and feet in the large brazen laver and immediately prepared the fire upon the altar of sacrifices. The Levites came and offered to assist him in his preparations, but he refused their aid, for he was unwilling they should participate in his care: whilst Rachel knelt upon the pavement of the tabernacle, holding her right hand over the head of the lamb, and presenting the doves in her left, waited for the moment of the sacrifice.

The sacred fire immediately kindled and burned before the Lord. Eleazar took the Victims, and shed their blood upon the altar on the northern side. The sacrificer added an ear of consecrated corn, and sprinkling them with new oil, the flame mounted upwards and consumed them. The young and modest Rachel, upon her knees, invoked, in a low

tone, the Lord of the Skies. Eleazar, in a louder voice implored Him to hearken to the prayers of the young Benjaminite; and to spare the life of him in whose fate she so deeply interested herself. He doubted not from her expressions, that it was on her father's account she felt so much anxiety; and that idea, joined to the remembrance of his brother's danger, rendered his prayers the more fervent, while the resemblance he perceived between his own and Rachel's heart, if it were possible, increased the love with which she had inspired him.

The sacrifice was hardly finished, when Eleazar, sparkling with joy, arose and running towards Rachel, exclaimed, "This is what the Lord says—Return to your home; the object of your uneasiness has recovered his health. Render thanks to the God of your fathers; and do not forget the Levite who feels himself flattered at being chosen by you to offer up your sacrifice."

Rachel bowed and worshipped. Then rising and wiping away the tears that bedewed her cheeks, she looked gratefully upon Eleazar, and in an instant disappeared. The son of Sadoc dared not stop her. He

sighed as he followed her with his eyes ; but the remembrance of his beloved brother tore him from his tender thoughts, and he hastened to resume his place beside him. On his return, he found his father's house covered with garlands—Naphtaly was out of danger. Naphtaly, restored to good health, had enquired for him, and now advanced, notwithstanding his weakness, to the threshold of the door to receive Eleazar in his arms—Eleazar, whom surprise and joy almost bereft of his reason.

BOOK II.

IN the mean time, the Israelites were entirely absorbed in the pleasures of their feast. The old men, the fathers, the mothers clad in their best apparel, spread tables before their houses, and covered them with the choicest meats. The young virgins, in linen dresses, crowned with white flowers, went about the town, dancing to the sound of the cistern and the cymbals. Parents and friends assembled together and the tribes united. The elders, the priests, and labourers, the inhabitants of the town and of the villages, formed but one family. Holding each other by the hand, they made the air resound with the name of Jacob ; and, as they embraced, repeated that they were the children of the same father ; that they had received the same kindnesses ; that they obeyed the same law. This immense people of brothers seemed to have but one soul

to celebrate this pleasing feast of happiness and friendship.

Sadoc was in the midst of them, followed by his two sons. The people on every side crowded around them, and as soon as they appeared, the tribes lifted their hands towards heaven and offered up prayers to the Lord for the high priest and his family. Every one was eager to get a nearer view of that amiable and affectionate Naphtaly, so lately spared by the Almighty; and while they congratulated his father, mingled their tears of joy with the tears of gratitude that bedewed the old man's cheeks.

Naphtaly, pale and languid, advanced slowly at the side of the high priest, leaning on Eleazar. The eyes of Eleazar were continually fixed upon him, and his looks, though beaming with satisfaction, at the same time betokened uneasiness. Naphtaly smiled to cheer him; and his smile, though full of goodness, was yet mixed with sorrow. Each had a secret yet unknown to his brother, and their tender friendship reproached them with it: both were tormented by it, and each, in giving his brother his hand, seemed to ask pardon.

As soon as they returned to their father's house, without informing each other of their intention, without letting each other know even by a sign, they stole away from their friends and went, by different paths, to the lonely end of the field which produced their subsistence. There, upon the bank of a torrent, the ancient border of their inheritance, under the shade of an old figtree planted by the Canaans, was a seat made of grass plot, where, every evening, the two brothers retired to meditate upon the holy law, to repose themselves after their rustic labors, and to talk of their friendship. Never had they gone there but together. This time alone they met there. "I was waiting for you," said they both at the same time. They embraced affectionately, looked at each other, and embraced again. When seated, Naphtaly was preparing to speak as Eleazar prevented him.

"Oh! my friend, my dearest brother," said he, "how has misfortune threatened us. How thankful ought we to be to that God who has deigned to restore you to life. In vain, prostrated before the holy ark, did I last night implore the Eternal to spare our

pulse, is agitated and troubled, and torments itself about another object than you, my Eleazar. It desires, it wants, it seeks a happiness which is independent of you. I am unacquainted with that happiness—I no longer know myself. I feel my heart tossed like a stone hurled from a sling by a powerful arm. Entirely and incessantly occupied about her whose image follows me every where; my only prayer, my only hope is to see her again, to speak to her, to hear her. The time which passes away without her no longer forms a part of my existence. The universe is reduced, in my eyes, to the spot where I first met her. At your side I look for her, ask for her, and expect her. Even your presence does not repress my sighs, nor can your embraces banish my uneasiness. O, my dear brother, in my turn I now ask your forgiveness; come, let us console each other. Our souls are still the same, the sacred flame of our friendship has not diminished its warmth; it animates and supports us, it is that sentiment which keeps us alive; but a passion, different from that, consumes and destroys us.”

Naphtaly then related to him the circum-

stance of his having saved the Israelite at the rocks of Remnon ; and, that immediately on seeing her he felt that violent love, on which hereafter his fate would depend. He added, that he knew no more of her, except that she looked as amiable and placid as she was handsome ; that her name was even foreign to his ears ; then drawing from his bosom the veil which the fair stranger had dropped, he shewed it to his brother and made him touch it, but without letting it out of his hand ; then he unfolded it, and having covered it with kisses, folded it up again with a trembling hand, and replaced it on his heart. But suddenly reproaching himself with talking so much on a subject that concerned himself alone, “ Eleazar,” he exclaimed, “ the surest way to make me less unfortunate, is to endeavour to make you more happy ! And that we shall be able easily to accomplish. You know that the young Israelite lives with her father in the hamlet of Luza. Do you think that an Hebrew shepherd, in giving his daughter to the son of the high priest, would not return thanks to the Lord ? Can you doubt that Rachel’s heart will beat with pleasure and

with pride, when she learns that she is destined for that young Eleazar, already so distinguished by and esteemed for his virtues, his piety, and his many amiable qualities, which make him almost as much beloved by all Israel, as he is by his brother. Take courage, Eleazar, Rachel shall be your wife. To-morrow I will speak of it to our venerable father; and, to-morrow he will send me to Luza. I will go and find Abdias; I will obtain his daughter of him for you; I will bring her to you, my brother, and your happiness will make me more patient in seeking and waiting for my own."

Eleazar threw himself into his brother's arms; and consented to be indebted to him for Rachel. But Rachel no longer contented him; he had now to discover that young and fair stranger of whom his brother had spoken. He thought of her and talked of her without ceasing, whilst Naphtaly's whole conversation was about the daughter of Abdias. Constantly did they interrupt one another, each always to forget himself, for both, since their confidence, seemed to have exchanged affection.

Called by the voice of Sadoc, they return-

ed to the old man. Naphtaly hastened to reveal to him his brother's passion and his wishes. "What, my son," said the old man, holding out his hand, "have you been afraid to make me acquainted with the desire which your heart has formed? Do you not know, that the happiness both of you procure me, cannot be more augmented than by seeing your's increase? Come, timid Eleazar, come to my bosom, and congratulate your father upon the pleasure which he feels in confirming your choice."

Eleazar wanted to throw himself at his feet, Sadoc pressed him to his heart, and turning towards Naphtaly, said, "To-morrow, my son, prepare to start for Luza, upon the quiet horse, that helps us to cultivate our fields. Take two measures of new barley flour with you, some dry raisins, some dates and wild figs; these trifling presents you shall offer to the father of the young Rachel, and, in my name, ask of him his daughter for my son; and I will, moreover, give you, for her, the earrings and two gold rings that were your mother's."

He spoke. Naphtaly did as he was commanded, and the next morning at day-break

began his journey to Luza, where he arrived before sunset. He enquired for the house of Abdias, and it was shewn to him; he knocked at the door, and an old man presented himself. "What do you require?" said he to him, "Are you one of our brethren? Whoever you may be, however, honour my dwelling by reposing with us to-night." Naphtaly bowed to Abdias, and replied, "Blessed be the Lord, He it is that conducted me to Luza, to present to you, in the name of Sadoc, the high priest of the living God, these gifts, the produce of the land the Almighty has given us. My father, Sadoc, requests you to give your daughter, Rachel, to my brother, Eleazar; to that Eleazar, whose name has doubtless already reached your ears, and whom all Israel looks upon as the worthy successor of Aaron and Sadoc."

"Are you not mistaken, my son," said the old man, with a placid smile, "is it of the shepherd Abdias, the most obscure, the least rich of the children of Jemini, that the high priest of the Jews sends to ask his daughter?" "Yes; it is to you that he sends;" said Naphtaly, "sprung all of us

from the same father, there is no other rank among us, in our tribes and families, than the respect due to virtue. The children of Levi carry the censer; but they, who pray, are their brethren; the most upright are the greatest."

Abdias, without making any other answer, took Naphtaly's hand, and pressing it between his own, swore, in the name of the Lord, that, from that moment, his daughter Rachel, was the wife of Eleazar. "She is in the fields," said he, "and has not yet brought her flock home; but the sun, already hidden behind the mountains of Seir, announces her speedy return. Come in, my son, come under my rustic roof, and I will go and fetch the kid, which shall be killed for you." As he spoke these words, he led Naphtaly into his peaceful habitation, and for a few moments withdrew himself.

The brother of Eleazar, while alone in the cottage, experienced a pleasure, a tender interest, an involuntary and subduing langour which astonished him. Every thing pleased him in this humble dwelling, every thing attracted his attention and delighted him.

He contemplated the simple arrangement and order of the earthen vases to receive the milk, the wicker baskets hanging against the walls, the shepherdess' crooks, the garland of faded roses which she had worn at the last feast. Every object, that his eyes met, spoke to his very heart, and filled his bosom with a sort of tremour; but he wished to think alone of his brother, and he attributed to friendship the secret emotion that disturbed him.

The noise of a flock returning from the fields was presently heard not far from the house. Naphtaly trembled and dared not go out, and asked himself the reason of his fears. He looked around for Abdias, called, and the old man returned leading in his daughter—Naphtaly saw her Oh, heaven! it was her—it was the Israelite whose life he had saved—it was the fair stranger whose image always present to his mind, reigned over his captive heart.

Motionless, like a terror stricken traveller in the desert, standing, with his arms extended, he restrained the cry ready to escape him. Rachel advanced in silence, her eyes fixed upon the ground, "Oh, my daugh-

ter," said Abdias to her, "this is the most fortunate day of your life; the virtuous Eleazar, the son and heir of the high priest, asks you in marriage. His brother, whom you see before you, has just received my sacred promise; give him yours as I have given him mine, and return thanks to the Almighty for condescending to honor your youth and my grey hairs with such an alliance."

At these words Rachel raised her eyes, and looked bashfully upon the brother of her husband she knew him again she uttered a piercing cry, her head sunk down upon her bosom, her face became pale, her knees trembled and gave way, and she fell, livid and motionless, into her father's arms.

Naphtaly hastened to assist her. Abdias recalled her to life. Recovering her senses, she endeavoured to soothe her father, and pretending to attribute the cause of her indisposition to thirst, asked Naphtaly (looking stedfastly at him) to give her something to appease it. Naphtaly, who understood her too well, filled a wooden cup with fresh water, and holding down his

head and scarcely breathing, presented it to her with a trembling hand. Rachel touched it with her lips, and gave it back to him immediately. Then turning towards the old man, "Father," she said, with a feeble voice, "you have given me to the son of Sadoc. I ought to obey without hesitation, and my heart is ready to follow my hand, if the brother of Eleazar will assure me, from his own lips, that he hath journeyed into these parts to call me his sister."

She addressed these words to Naphtaly, and accompanied them with a look beaming with love, and yet mixed with anger. Ah! that terrible look went through the very heart of the young Israelite! What, at that moment, were his sufferings. His friendship, however, supported his virtue, and the absence of Eleazar pleaded more powerfully than the presence of Rachel. "Yes;" said he, in a broken voice, "yes, my brother adores you. His happiness, his destiny, his life depends upon obtaining you. I desired, and solicited permission to come and present to you his vows, and upon my knees I repeat my earnest, my humble prayer."

He pronounced these words as quickly as

he could, lest he should be unable to finish them, and turning his looks from Rachel, he fell at her feet. His mind then seemed much less oppressed, and satisfied with having done his duty, and having remained faithful to his brother, he fancied he no longer felt his trouble; and, in the calm where his exhausted strength had left him, he awaited Rachel's answer.

The Benjaminite listened to him, and blushed, and turned pale almost in the same instant. She withdrew from Naphtaly, and making a sign for him to rise, approached her father, who was lost in astonishment at this long silence, and said, "I am satisfied, I accept Eleazar for my husband. I beg to devote the remainder of this day in taking leave of my companions. I love them, I love these borders where I was born, and where I have lived a long time in happiness and comfort: to-morrow I must leave them. The friend who has volunteered to be the bearer of Eleazar's declaration, without doubt, will excuse my tears."

As soon as she had uttered these words, she departed and hurried quickly away.

Her father endeavoured to make excuses for her to Naphtaly. Alas! in his unfortunate situation he had need of concealing his own tears. The only answer he was able to make, was to extol his brother, and to proclaim the respect, the attention, and the love that would attend Rachel. In this manner he contrived to occupy and divert Abdias, and prevent him from perceiving the trouble that agitated his mind.

Night had spread her veil over the earth when Rachel returned to them. Serenity shone upon her countenance. She called Naphtaly by the name of brother, and anxious to fulfil all the duties of hospitality, prepared lambs'-skins for him on which he might pass the night, got the entertainment ready, decorated the table with flowers, seated herself beside the young Hebrew, and presented him with the back of the kid. Abdias smiled at his daughter, whose gaiety alone enlivened the feast. Naphtaly dared not encounter her looks, and Rachel without embarrassing him with questions or unnecessary politeness, shortened the evening by retiring early to rest.

The next morning, at day-break, she was ready to begin her journey. Her father expressed a wish to accompany her and Naphtaly thanked heaven for having inspired him with that determination. Rachel wearing the golden ornaments which had been sent her, mounted the horse; Naphtaly held the reins, and Abdias, at his daughter's side, guided them on their journey.

Naphtaly walked forward holding down his head, without daring, even once, to fix his eyes on her whom he was conducting. Rachel observed him without uttering a word, and repeated to herself, and endeavoured to persuade herself, that Naphtaly had never loved her; that, when he saved her life, he was actuated only by pity; that he had anxiously sought after the barbarous office of asking her hand for another, and that the gloomy melancholy, which she saw settled on his countenance, was the effect only of his character. As soon as she had given way but for a short time to this feeling, she became oppressed with a secret sorrow, which she took for hatred. Her heart rejoiced at it and encouraged her, and she

promised herself to hate this proud young man even more ; nevertheless she took advantage of the young Israelite's situation to look continually at him, and though she could with difficulty turn away her eyes, she blamed herself for fixing them on him.

Abdias being perfectly acquainted with the shortest roads that led to Silo, took a very different one from that by which Naphtaly had come the day before to Luza. They crossed a long plain where a few palm trees alone were planted, and approaching the mountains of Ephraim, arrived about the third hour at the foot of the rocks of Remnon. Naphtaly, who followed Abdias, without observing the places through which he passed, mounted up a narrow crooked path covered with weeds. The difficulty of the road, and the continual attention that was necessary to preserve Rachel from the dangers under her feet, suspended for a while the painfulness of his reflections. After a long and tiresome walk, he arrived, exhausted by the heat, at the top of the barren rocks. There, looking before him, he discovered the very spot where Rachel had implored his assistance. He stopped, trembling at every joint, and

looked unintentionally at Rachel. Rachel was expecting that look, and yet was unable to support it. Her head sunk down upon her bosom, and she raised her two hands to conceal her tears. Naphtaly, quite overcome, leaned against a fragment of a rock, and the old man, Abdias, hastening to his side, said, "Let us rest ourselves, we are now half-way—let us sit down for a few minutes." Then holding out his arm to his daughter, he lifted her off her horse, brought her to Naphtaly and placing them close to each other, sat down beside them.

After a long and sorrowful silence, Abdias ventured to break it, by asking the son of Sadoc when and where Eleazar had seen Rachel. Naphtaly related to him that she had been to the Tabernacle, and that his brother had offered up the sacrifice of the two doves and the lamb, which Rachel presented to the Lord for the recovery of her father. "For my recovery!" exclaimed Abdias, addressing himself to his daughter, "Ah! what vain alarms made you tremble for my days? They have not been in danger; and why conceal your journey from me? Why

did not your filial piety inform your father of the vows of which he was the object?" "You are deceived;" said Rachel to him, "you are deceived; the sacrifice was not for you. The evening before, being pursued by the cruel Moabites, and wandering among these dreadful rocks, I escaped death through the assistance of a young huntsman, whom I left, after he had saved my life, in a dying state. I returned immediately to find him, but my search was fruitless. Uneasy about his fate, trembling, lest he should have fallen into the hands of our enemies, I sat off the next day, as night was approaching. I went and carried my humble offering to the house of the Lord, and implored Him to save that generous man to whom I owed the preservation of my existence. Eleazar prayed for my father, I prayed for my deliverer."

Rachel blushed as she uttered these words, and Naphtaly, enraptured, exclaimed, "Good heavens! What is it you say? Was it for the fortunate man?" "Yes;" replied Rachel, fixing her eyes upon him, "it was for my deliverer. I thought his days were in danger. I thought

but I was deceived; I afterwards learnt that he was enjoying life and happiness. I learnt that he had forgotten his danger as he had his generosity."

Naphtaly rose in haste at these last words, and said, "Let us go on, my good father; let us go on, my brother is waiting for us."

BOOK III.

THE sun was already buried in the bosom of the ocean; the flocks collected together, were slowly descending the mountains, when Abdias, his daughter, and Naphtaly drawing near to Silo, perceived the violet-coloured tent which covered the Tabernacle. At that sight they stopped and prostrated themselves before the holy place, then, having offered up a short prayer, they continued their journey and soon arrived at the gates.

Sadoc and Eleazar, followed by their relations and friends, had been for a considerable time awaiting them. There, a chosen number of the young women of Silo, clothed in long robes, and carrying bunches of lilies in their hands, came out to meet Rachel, and surrounding her, crowned her with flowers, and conducted her in triumph to the high priest, whom they perceived advancing. Rachel threw herself at his knees, Sadoc raised her, embraced her, and pre-

sented her to Eleazar, who was transported with love and joy. The modest Rachel remained silent. Her husband, although full of happiness, and delighted beyond measure at beholding her, nevertheless looked around for his brother. He called him, held out his arms to him, left Rachel to run to him, and bringing him to his wife, joined their hands together between his own, and then placed them thus united upon his heart. In this manner Eleazar advanced, accompanied by all he loved. The high priest followed with Abdias. The young women preceded him, and the people of Silo crowded about their passage, and celebrated their tender union in their loud exclamations.

As soon as they were arrived at the house of the high priest, he announced, that the next day there would be a sacrifice of thanksgiving to sanctify the marriage of his son. The people then separated and left the young couple to themselves.

Sadoc hastened to present his guests the fruits and refreshments he had prepared for them. He paid particular attention to Abdias, and proposed to him to come and live at Silo, and finish his days with his be-

loved daughter. "Let us unite," said he to him, "old age has need of friends. At our time of life, our best friends are in our family. The name of father claims as well as inspires indulgence. With this name, so grateful to the ear, one grows old without fearing the consequences. The tender cares which Rachel might forget, will be rendered you by Eleazar; those which might escape Eleazar, I shall receive from the hands of Rachel. Our hearts will confound our children; we shall each of us have doubled our riches." Abdias promised not to leave him, and Rachel thanked him for his concession. She received with gratitude the kind attentions of the delighted Eleazar; and Naphtaly concealing his grief, and banishing every appearance of sorrow from his countenance, smiled at Rachel and his brother, and congratulated them in all the sincerity of his affectionate heart.

Thus passed the remainder of the evening. When the lamps were waning, Sadoc ordered his sons to go and wait till day in the house of one of their relations, and they went to Phanuel's. But sleep approached not their eyelids. Eleazar, who perceived his bro-

ther's uncasiness, attributed it to his love for the young Israelite, whom he was so impatient once more to meet. He endeavoured to console his grief by discoursing of the fair stranger, by telling him they would go together to seek her. Naphtaly tried in vain to banish his wretched thoughts, by congratulating Eleazar on the happiness which awaited him; but Eleazar ever returned to the subject which occupied his brother. He could not be happy whilst Naphtaly was not so; and in his anxiety to soothe his pangs, he only rendered them the more painful.

At length the bright morn began to shine in the East. The young husband prepared himself, and chose his best apparel. Naphtaly took a pleasure in helping him to dress. It was he who arranged the long tresses of his hair, and gracefully fastened them under his glittering tiara: it was he who spread over his shoulders the long purple mantle, which formerly he had gained in the warlike games of the Jews, the prize of his courage and address. Beaming with youth and happiness, Eleazar was still more embellished by the care and gifts of Naphtaly.

On their return to the house of their father, they found the Levites in their best dresses ; the young women and the people assembled waiting at the door for the youthful bride. She soon appeared, clothed in a white tunic, with an embroidered veil over her head. Timid, trembling, and almost tottering, she walked before her father, and refused to lean on Naphtaly's arm. Eleazar, transported with joy, advanced at the head of the Levites, arrived the first at the Tabernacle, and occupied himself in the preparations, brought the victims and presented them to Sadoc. Twelve rams were offered up : the people joined their prayers to those of the high priest, and implored the Almighty to grant that the second Rachel, whose beauty equalled that of the first, might be as fruitful as Lia, and that the young couple might grow old together like Sarah and Abraham. The same company strewing their path with flowers and singing their ancient hymns, reconducted them to their home, after having made them follow in a procession round the city.

As soon the ceremony was concluded, Sadoc commanded the young couple to sign the engagement they had contracted. Elea-

zar's hand trembled with joy: Rachel's trembled still more. Naphtaly had withdrawn himself, and his brother was already seeking him. He found him, and brought him back to the marriage feast, and whilst old Sadoc was employed in making his assembled family welcome, the happy, the amiable Eleazar talked to Rachel and Naphtaly of nothing but his desire, and his hope, to live always between two objects equally dear to him, and to see his brother and his wife love each other as he loved them.

Alas! Rachel and Naphtaly blushed as they promised it, and trembled lest they were guilty in feeling more than even they expressed. But Naphtaly relied upon his virtue, strengthened by his friendship. Rachel, who did not possess this double support, was alarmed and flew from the danger. She meditated a bold and hardy project, which she executed immediately, and taking advantage of a moment's disorder in the removal of the entertainment, demanded a secret conference with the unhappy Naphtaly.

They walked, without looking at each other, to the solitary fig tree planted upon the bank of the torrent. Rachel sat down by

its aged trunk, and beckoning Naphtaly to her side, in a firm tone said to him.


“The moments are precious, let us not lose them in dissimulation. Let us conceal our combats, but let us secure the victory. I love you, you adore me, and I hasten to confess it to you, for your virtue has left me no other means of being as virtuous as yourself.

“I am unacquainted with that which has taken place since the fatal moment when I appeared before Eleazar. I never wish to be informed of it. That which I do know, that which I am sure of is, that you are sacrificing your love for me to your love for your brother. This is a great and noble sacrifice, but the source of your sorrow, becomes, at the same time, the recompence of it. You sacrifice love to friendship, but friendship, at least, remains with you. Ah! I feel that we are not to be pitied, when we join to the glory of doing our duties the consolation which so tender a sentiment affords.

“Naphtaly, I have no brother, I am the wife of Eleazar, but it is you whom I would have chosen, for it is to you that I owe my life. Can you think that your be-

nevolence, the admiration with which your painful duty inspires me, the continual spectacle of your struggles and of your triumphs, will not every day increase the passion that I ought to extinguish. In vain will you be conqueror, your victory will weaken me. The more I shall see you unhappy, the more amiable you will appear to me. I can defend myself against my own torments, but I cannot support yours; it is for you to assist me—fly, fly, therefore, from these parts. If your virtue require not the antidote of absence, go, if it be for the sake of mine, of your brother's, in the promotion of whose happiness I declare myself unable to participate, so long as you shall remain present. Find out, invent some pretext, but leave Rachel; return, cured of your passion, if it be possible, or return no more."

She was silent and was about to return to the house of Sadoc, when Naphtaly, in order to detain her, rose and took her hand; but scarcely had he touched it, before he drew his own back, and recollecting himself, endeavoured to recal the strength which had abandoned him; then, without raising his looks to Rachel, he pronounced these sor-



rowful words: “ Sister, sister, be not afraid, I am only going to reply to your last request. I swear, upon mine honor, that I will leave this very night—I will never look on you again—I will never behold my brother again—Ah ! forgive these tears, I have a right to shed some for my dear Eleazar. I feel that I ought to have left you without replying, but your peace and that of my brother commanded me to inform you, that he never suspected that I had seen you before himself. He did not know, and I should never have known that Rachel had been that Israelite It is enough ; let this interview, my dear sister, remain an eternal secret between my heart and your virtue ; never let Eleazar know how much friendship has done for him ; he would no longer be happy, and I should lose the reward of my sacrifice.

“ One more duty remains for me to fulfil ; your glory imposes it on me. I have one desire, and am now going to accomplish it, namely, to restore into your hands the only wealth which I possessed, the only pledge which remained to me of an affection—hereafter guilty. Take back this veil, which

my heart so highly prizes, and which you let fall at my feet: this veil, which, ever since that day, has lain upon my sorrowful bosom. There it is Rachel and now let us return: I tremble lest this conversation should cease to be innocent. At least let it be useful to my brother; to-morrow, when that unhappy man bewailing my absence, shall have only you to console him, tell him, my dear sister, tell him, that I have entrusted my sorrow to you; that I cannot exist without that fair stranger, who, together with himself, reigns over my heart; tell him that I am gone to die in regretting her. You will be able to swear it to him."

At these words Naphtaly presented the veil with a trembling hand; Rachel took it without replying, and covered her face with it.

As they were returning to the house, they met Sadoc who was looking for them; he embraced his daughter, and complaining of her long absence, led her back to his family, who were loudly asking for her. Naphtaly left her, endeavoured to avoid her, and tried to find Eleazar.

But Eleazar had already perceived that

his wife and Naphtaly had left the company, and giving way to the necessity which his heart experienced of being always with them, had followed at a distance, and beholding them seated beside each other, had taken a circuitous path in order to rejoin them unperceived. It was not mistrust or even curiosity which had prompted him to do so. He had no idea of learning by stealth the secrets of his brother; he was conscious that for him he had none. The happy, the amiable Eleazar unintentionally, and without reflection, abandoned himself to that generous impulse, friendship's sweet companion, to that confident candour which is never afraid of giving offence, because it is never offended, and which sees no harm in doing itself that which it would pardon in another.

As he arrived behind the boughs of the trees, he saw Naphtaly give Rachel the veil he had so long carried on his bosom, and which he knew to be the Israelite's. He heard the last words Naphtaly had uttered. Those words—that veil told him every thing. Eleazar discovered, at the same instant, Rachel's misfortune, and the sorrow and the virtue of his brother. Leaning against the




fig tree, he remained grief stricken and motionless, his head sunk upon his breast and his arms hung downward. He no longer saw or heard any thing ; his eyes were covered with darkness. His soul whelmed in grief was, as it were, overshadowed. Like a man struck by lightning he saw the flash and felt the mortal blow.

During this time Rachel and Naphtaly had arrived at the house of Sadoc. When Eleazar returned to himself, his looks sought them in vain. He experienced a horrible joy at finding himself free and alone. He approached the bank of the torrent, contemplated its foaming waves, measured its depth, and abandoned himself to frightful despair.

“ God of goodness,” he exclaimed, “ I implore alone thy justice. If it were only myself who had to suffer, my respect for thy holy decrees would enable me to endure my misery ; but my wife and brother, on my account, are wretched. They will be more and more so every day, and will be miserable as long as I exist. It is no longer in my power to refuse their sacrifice ; it is not permitted me to accept it ; it is forbidden me

to bewail it with them. Every thing which endears one to life, united love, friendship, virtue, is rent asunder to increase my torments. O, Almighty God! be thou my judge; my brother wishes to die for me; *his* death would make me the more to be pitied, but *mine* will restore his peace."

He ceased, and was going to precipitate himself into the midst of the gulf; but, at that moment, his wandering eyes caught the house of Sadoc; that house, inhabited by his father, where the good old man had brought him up; where he could yet hear the prayers that were offered up to heaven for his happiness, and the songs of joy that were singing in honor of him. He stopped, seized the wild fig tree with one hand, and thus secured assistance against himself; then contemplating that grass plot, where, so many times since his childhood, he had sat with Naphtaly, and where they had sworn to live and die together; he felt a soothing sorrow succeed to his madness. Eleazar had not yet wept; but the tears gushed on a sudden from his eyes, and those tears, as they brought him consolation, restored to him his reason, his faculties, and his natural

gentleness. "No, no;" said he, "I cannot die here. I will not profane, by a voluntary death, this asylum of nature, this retreat of friendship. This spot, where my father has often embraced me, where my brother has loved me, has become hallowed, and is to be dreaded. The most legitimate grief possesses not the right to trouble its peace. Let me fly, let me fly, and go and seek a country where happiness and tenderness are unknown, that I may there give myself up to my despair." He followed the side of the stream with a quick step, and meeting with large pieces of rock which rendered the crossing easy, he gained the opposite side, climbed up the mountains, and rushed into the desert.

The astonished Naphtaly was now asking for and seeking his brother. Rachel, Sadoc, and Abdias perceiving the time pass, fancied Eleazar was at the Tabernacle occupied in praying to the Lord. Day had given place to night, and Naphtaly uneasy and full of apprehension, returned from the tabernacle. He ran over their fields, stopped at the fig tree, called Eleazar with a loud voice, and heard nothing but the roaring of the water rolling along as it fell. More alarmed than

he expressed, he questioned his father, his family, his friends, pressed his importunities with impatience and did not wait their answers. He became agitated, ran, returned, and at last learnt that his brother had been seen walking along the bank of the torrent. The impetuous Naphtaly, who forgot his projects, his love, and Rachel, immediately took a long branch of a fir tree, set fire to it, and guided by its flame, darted to the water's side.

The young Levites, the friends and companions of the unfortunate Eleazar, imitated his brother. All of them having procured lighted torches, followed Naphtaly at a distance, ran over the roads, climbed up the desert rocks, spread over the mountains, and dispersed themselves in every direction, crying out Eleazar! Eleazar! Sadoc, Abdias, and Rachel, who remained on the other side, heard their mournful cries, and the echo which repeated them, the profound horror of the night, the appearance, of those fires wandering in the darkness, every thing tended to increase the shock, and the dismay which congealed their very blood.

The night was consumed in these melan-

choly cares. Eleazar was not discovered. Some time after day break, Naphtaly, with his hair in disorder, his countenance covered with a death-like paleness, his feet torn and bleeding, returned to Sadoc. He clasped his hand without uttering a word, and dared not even look at Rachel. Aghast, motionless and speechless, he presented the nourishment which was offered to him to his companions, refreshing his lips alone, then wrapping himself in a wolf's skin, he took his bow and his terrible arrows, and was impatient again to set out.

But an old shepherd was seen advancing, bringing in his hands garments covered with sand and mud. Naphtaly uttered a piercing cry; the shepherd addressed himself to Sadoc. "Should you know the mantle again your son wore?" said he; and, as he spoke, he laid at his feet the tiara of Eleazar, and the purple mantle his brother had put around him. Sadoc, when he saw them, fell into the arms of Abdias. Naphtaly threw himself upon the mantle, fixed his pale lips upon it, exclaiming, "O, my brother! my brother!" and his voice and his senses forsook him; however, soon coming

to himself again, he broke his bow and his quiver, tore his garment in pieces, and drawing near to the shepherd, said to him in a wild and desponding voice, "Tell me when and where you found those things." "This morning at day break," replied the old man, quite alarmed at Naphtaly's incoherent manner, "beside that rock from whence the waters of the torrent descend; the tiara was on the bank, the mantle farther off in the middle of the stream."

Naphtaly looked at the shepherd and made him a sign to retire. The young Levites crowded hastily around him, but he repulsed them and entreated them to leave him to himself. They immediately withdrew and spread over Silo the melancholy and lamentable news of Eleazar's death. The whole people, who cherished and respected him, sent forth their sorrowful cries to heaven, covered their heads with ashes, and condemned themselves to ten days' mourning. All Israel bewailed the son of Israel's benefactor. Alas ! the wretched Sadoc, whose days were preserved alone by the tenderness of Rachel, heard those heart-rending accents, and falling on his knees, he lifted up his

hands, and cried with a feeble voice, **Eleazar!** **Eleazar!** my beloved **Eleazar!** At that name Naphtaly ran and threw himself on the old man's bosom, and endeavoured to speak, but his sobs prevented him, and after the greatest efforts, he was only able to repeat after his father, **Eleazar! Eleazar! my dear Eleazar!**

BOOK IV.

SEVENTY days had at length passed away, and Sadoc, overwhelmed with the weight of his misfortune, had sighed, amid his moments of sorrow, for the termination of his sufferings; but the tenderness of Naph-taly, and the cares and attention of Rachel, had preserved the thread of his languishing existence. Abdias did not leave him, but talked to him of Eleazar, whom both called their son, and that name made them feel a certain pleasure in weeping together. The wretched Rachel, in her mourning dress, her head covered with a long black veil, divided her consolations between them. Naph-taly, whose behaviour had assumed an air of singular incoherency, or who was per-chance afraid, though unwilling to admit it, of being near Rachel, passed whole days alone seated at the foot of the wild fig tree. There, with his own hands, he had raised a humble tomb of grass plot. There, under a

smooth stone, he had deposited all the remains he possessed of his brother. That poor image of a tomb served to beguile his grief. At the dawn of day he went to it, for his sufferings seemed to diminish their poignancy beside it, and he fancied himself nearer to him whose loss he lamented.

Old Sadoc, however, who religiously observed all the commandments of Moses, seeing the time of Rachel's mourning expired, sent for Naphtaly, and in the presence of Abdias and Rachel, said to him, "My son, you are acquainted with the Jewish law; you know that it commands you to marry the widow of your brother. The name of Eleazar, which is so much respected, must not become extinct in Israel; it is for your children to restore it."

At these words Naphtaly reproached himself for the joy he experienced. His countenance changed colour, his eyes were fixed upon the ground, his heart beat with pleasure, and yet throbbed with sorrow. The happiness he was destined to partake seemed to be at variance with his religious sentiments.

"Oh! my father," he exclaimed, "I have

ever adored Rachel. In obeying our holy law, I shall be gratifying my dearest inclination. But Eleazar is no more, how can I dare be happy. Rachel, forgive the demand I am about to make; forgive it all of you, if I request, immediately after the celebration of our marriage, to be permitted to indulge, and even to increase, if it be possible my everlasting sorrow, by leading a life of sequestered solitude."

"My dear Son," said Sadoc, "I have anticipated your desires, and have just announced to the elders of the people, that I restore to them the censor and the ephod. My trembling hands could no longer slay the consecrated victims; my mind, weakened by old age, is no longer capable of celebrating the praises of the Most High. If my dear Eleazar were still alive, I should yet possess all my strength. The elders wished to elect you, but I refused the proffered honor for you. I had already discovered in your looks your wish for seclusion. Yes, Naphtaly, we will shut ourselves up, we will conceal ourselves from the world. The unhappy are only comfortable in each others' society. Abdias, your wife, and myself, not-

withstanding all our grief, will yet be able to love you."

Then taking the hand of Rachel, he joined it to that of his son and declared, that according to the Mosaic law, the offspring of their marriage should have the rights and bear the name of Eleazar's children. Then he implored the God of Jacob to bless this new union, which made him the second time the father of Rachel. The young couple, while they listened to him, scarcely dared to look at each other, and their glances expressed at the same time grief, piety, and all the anxieties of sincere affection.

From this time Naphtaly, Rachel, Sadoc and Abdias became strangers to the world. They fancied themselves left alone upon the earth and contented with their own reflections, their days were devoted to labour, friendship, and tenderness. Abdias, having sold his flocks and house at Luza, was enabled to increase the estate of Sadoc, in which they now began to plant vines and olive trees. This produced subsistence for the family, and furnished them wherewith beside to comfort the poor. The indigent were the only people they had not forgotten.

Naphtaly rose at day break and went into the fields to work, where he sowed wheat and barley or pruned the vines, and placed supporters under the young shoots, or cultivated his olives. As soon as the sun, in the middle of his course, darted his fiery rays over the whole horizon, he ceased his pleasing task and returned, exhausted by the heat, to his peaceful home. Rachel would come to meet him, and the sight alone of his wife would refresh the delighted husband. Holding her by the hand, they walked together to the table where the old men, already seated, would rise to embrace him. The provident wife brought the meats she had prepared, and they partook their frugal repast together, and prolonged it often for the pleasure alone of each others' society. Then they returned to the fields and shared in the rustic labours, and as soon as the sun was concealed behind the western clouds, Rachel and her husband withdrew to the tomb of their brother; there, falling on their knees, their faces resting on the stone, they remained in silent meditation, or if they sometimes spoke, it was ever of Eleazar, to recal either his actions or his words: never

did other conversation profane that spot dedicated to their grief; never did Rachel or Naphtaly presume there to address each other by the tender titles their marriage had given them.

Thus days and months passed away. Twelve times had the moon retrod her monthly path, when Rachel became the mother of a son. He was named Eleazar, and this name seemed to augment his parents' affection for him. Never was there a finer child, never did grace and intelligence announce themselves earlier than in the young Eleazar. Hardly had he arrived at his fourth year, before he understood and remembered all that Sadoc said to him. The old man knew not how to leave him an instant, and would take him from Rachel's arms to carry him in his own feeble ones, and would lead him into the fields and lift him up upon his head, that he might himself gather the fruit whose bright colour most attracted him. He invented amusements for him and joined in them with pleasure. Often you might see the venerable high priest, whose grey beard descended upon his breast, playing on the grass with Naphtaly's child :

old Abdias joined in their games and Rachel looking on them as she sat making a cloak for her father, would let her spindle drop to wipe away the tears that trickled down her smiling cheeks.

Soon, however, the child as he grew up, required more serious cares from Sadoc, who wished entirely to take upon himself the delightful task of his education. He taught him to read the holy laws, and engraved on his tender heart the precepts of the Almighty. Eleazar already knew the commandments given to Moses, and could repeat the great wonders which the Lord displayed in bringing his people out of Egypt. He charmed Sadoc and his mother by his capacity and memory, and when Naphtaly returned from his work, his son, seated on the knees of his friend, his master, and his grandfather, would relate to him the history of Joseph, who nourished and forgave his brethren after they had sold him. The old man listened to the child, and in a low voice, repeated every word after him. He really fancied he was learning from him that beautiful and affecting story, and he wept over the fate of Jacob when his son

ed, and gently wiping away his tears, listened to him as she caressed him.

“You are going to learn,” said Eleazar, “why I am away from you so much, and when you have heard me, you will soon forgive me. One day, last month, I ventured for the first time to cross the torrent. As I was going down the opposite bank, I perceived an old man, covered with rags, sitting under an oak. His hair hung over his forehead, his beard descended upon his almost naked breast. His face was pale, he seemed ill and suffering. Yet he did not frighten me, but, on the contrary, excited in my bosom the liveliest interest. I had some fruit with me which I had taken from your table, I went and gave it him; he looked stedfastly at me, and said, “I have no need, my friend, of that which your benevolence offers me, but I should like to become acquainted with a person as benevolent as yourself. What is your name, my son, and who are the fortunate parents to whom the Lord has given so charitable a child?” “I am Eleazar,” said I, “the venerable Sadoc, the revered high priest of Israel is my grandfather, my mother’s name is Rachel, my father’s Naph-

taly, and whilst I respect and cherish the poor, I am only acting in obedience to their commands."

Scarcely had I uttered these words, than, advancing towards me, he took me in his arms, and lifting me up, held me a long time, pressed against his heart. He said nothing, but sighed, and I felt his tears fall upon my cheeks. "Be not astonished," said he, "at the friendship I feel for you. I owe my life to Sadoc, and could not behold his grandson without experiencing this emotion, which, I hope, does not offend you." Then he began to smile, but I could easily perceive his features were unaccustomed to portray sentiments of joy. I took him by the hand and said, "Follow me and I will lead you to Sadoc; he will love me the more for taking the poor to him." "No," he replied, casting his eyes upon the ground, "I am banished from Silo for a crime involuntarily committed. I should be lost, if I were to appear there. You see, my child, how great is my confidence in you, my life is now in your power. If you should have the misfortune to reveal to any one that I am concealed in this mountain, and that you have met

me here, they would come and tear me from hence to inflict the greatest torments on me."

These words made me tremble. I promised to keep his secret and return to see him. The next day I did return, and he was waiting at the same place for me. Delighted with my exactness and relying upon my promises, he led me to his place of refuge, which is no great distance from hence. It is in a small grotto, concealed among the rocks, where I could see nothing but a few branches of the date tree. The fruit he ate, the branches served him to sleep on. "This is my abode," said he, "but I do not flatter myself that there is any thing in it to induce you to return to it; yet you would make me extremely happy if you would come from time to time. This morning early, after having run over the mountain, by dint of labor, I succeeded in catching two wild pigeons alive. Since you are fond of birds, I shall employ myself in catching more, for my desire to please you, will give me both strength and dexterity."

Then he gave me the two pigeons in a cage made of rushes. They were the first, my

dear mother, which I offered you. All the presents I have made you come from him. The good man, who was always thinking of me, when he could not see me, sat springes for the doves, and gathered the finest fruits for me. Then he would come and wait and I always found him sitting at the entrance of his grotto with his presents in his hand. The joy which I experienced at receiving them, seemed directly to glisten in his eyes. He kissed me, placed me beside him, sometimes on his knees, and when he had looked steadfastly at me, we talked together. He spoke of you, mother, of my father and grandfather as if he felt interested in your happiness, and made me repeat every thing you said. I was pleased with his conversation and delighted to visit so good and amiable a friend, and I said, since then, I am the only person upon earth who can comfort and console him, duty commands me to see him often.

I went to him this morning as soon as it was light, because he was unwell yesterday, and I carried him some milk unknown to you, hoping it might do him good. But his illness is since become more alarming. I found him on his bed. He took the milk,

and pressing my hand against his bosom, thanked me, but it was impossible not to see the great efforts he was making to conceal his sufferings. I did not like to leave him, and should even now, my dear mother, have been with him, if the thought had not struck me that you might be able to assist him. Oh ! come, come with me, perhaps you may yet be able to save his life !”

Thus spoke Eleazar ; Rachel kissed him with the tears standing in her eyes, “Amiable child,” said she, “how good, how feeling is your tender heart ! how proud am I in being your mother. Yes, my child, I will follow you, let us not lose a single moment.”

She rose and ran to the house. Naphtaly had just returned from seeking his son. Rachel immediately related every thing she had heard, and her delighted husband could not restrain the tear of pity bursting from his eye. He insisted on accompanying them to the grotto of the recluse, and took with him some oil and wine, whilst Rachel provided herself with other provisions. Eleazar was their guide and led them to the mountain.

Eleazar hurried their steps, and on arriving at the entrance of the cavern, entreated them.

to stop ; then, entering alone, he said to the poor man who lay stretched upon his bed of sorrow, "forgive me, my good friend, forgive me, I have divulged your secret in the hope of being useful to you. But be not alarmed, my friend, I have only brought my father and mother to you."

"What do you say, my child," cried the dying man, endeavouring to raise himself, "What Naphtaly! what Rachel! shall I then embrace you once more. God of all goodness, grant me strength for it!"

At these words, at that voice, Naphtaly uttered a piercing cry—he remembered those accents, and darting into the cavern, flew to him, fell upon his kness, and embraced his brother It was him, it was the long lost Eleazar. Rachel once more beheld her first husband. Speechless, confounded, and unable to move, she supported Naphtaly, whose head lay sunk upon his brother's bosom. The child looked at them with astonishment and burst into tears, and the dying Eleazar putting one arm round his brother, held out a hand to Rachel and entreated the child not to cry.

As soon as their senses had recovered a

little from the effect of so extraordinary an emotion, they all looked at each other without being able to utter a single word. Eleazar, however, was the first to raise his faltering voice, and leaning upon his brother, said to him, "Naphtaly, time presses me, let me take advantage of the last moment that I am still permitted to call you brother. Do not disturb the heavenly joy I experience on beholding you once again. Remember, my only friend, that thy Eleazar dies far more happily than he has lived.

"The very day of my marriage, I saw you, at the fig tree, give back to Rachel the veil which you had so long carried in your bosom. That single sentence explains every thing. I have only done that which you were going to do.

"I took care to leave my clothes besmeared with mud scattered over the banks of the water, that such a circumstance might divest you of every doubt of my death, and that the law might command you to marry my widow. I said to myself, he will be, at least, partly happy, and that thought inspired me with courage to support life.

"I sat off without any fixed plan. I left

Canaan and arrived at Emath. I was in hopes of being able to forget Rachel, alas ! I hoped in vain ! I could not live without her, nor without my brother. I found myself in the world alone, abandoned, like a bunch of grapes left on the vine by the harvester. After nine years' misery, useless misery, which neither brought me death nor blunted my memory, I returned, in spite of myself, towards Silo and took up my abode in these mountains. Here I concealed myself during the day, and as soon as night arrived, wandered around your house. I trembled lest I should be discovered, and yet burned with impatience to see you.

“ At last, seated one evening behind a rock opposite the wild fig tree, I beheld you leading Rachel by the hand and my heart recognized you immediately. I was obliged to cling to the crag to prevent myself from rushing into your presence. You came and placed yourselves upon your knees before a tomb of grass plot, which you watered with your tears, and amid your sobs, I distinctly heard you pronounce the name of Eleazar. Ah ! my brother, my wife, that moment alone repaid my nine years' sufferings. They love me still, I exclaimed, and

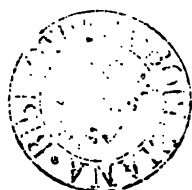
henceforth I no longer dared to call myself unhappy.

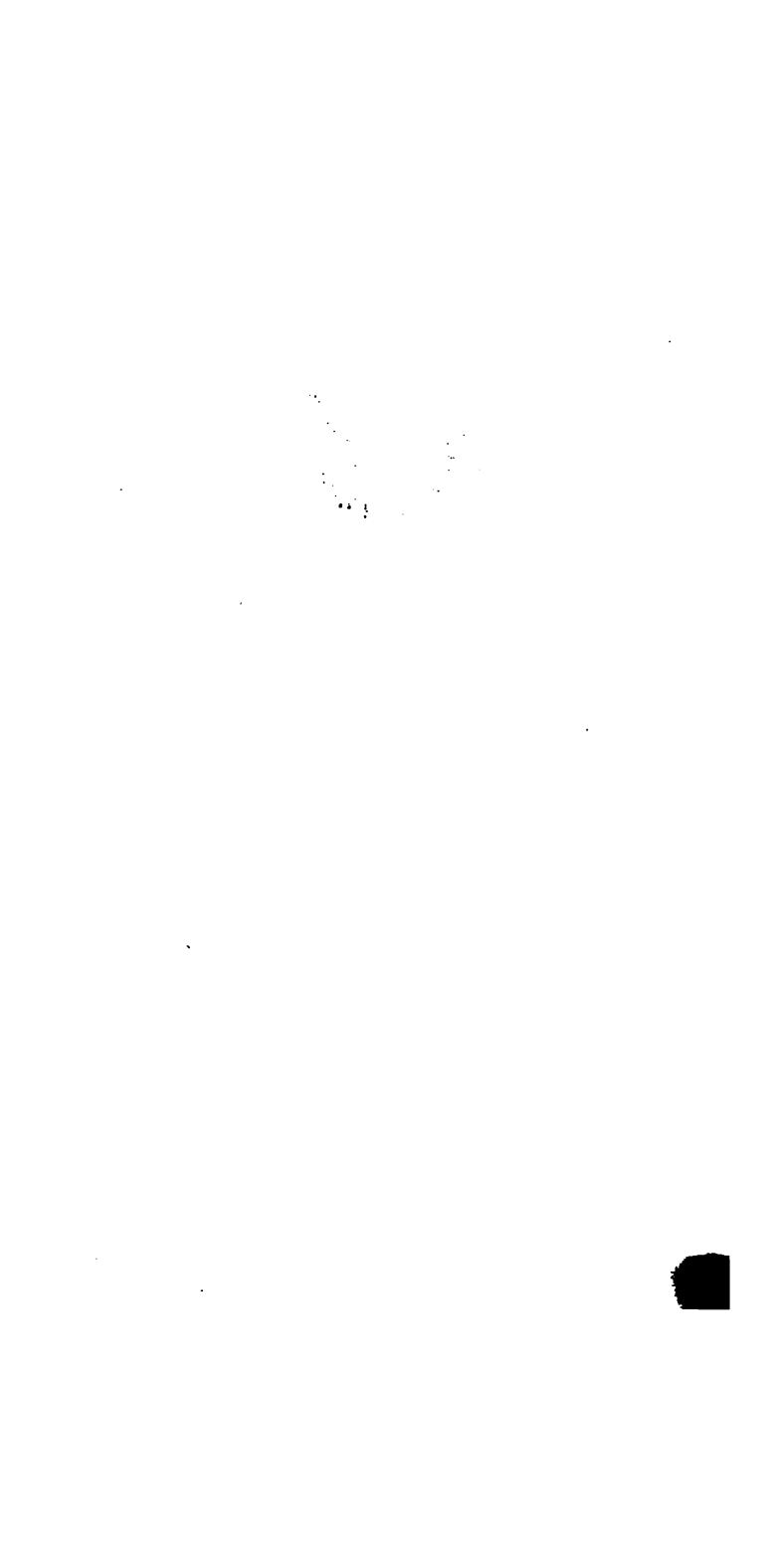
“From that moment I determined to remain here. I sought out a place and found this grotto. The date tree has supplied me with food; the water of the torrent has sufficed to quench my thirst, I saw you every night, what more could I desire? I reproached myself with the tears you shed, and nevertheless they gave me pleasure. I could have wished to have seen you more happy, and yet it would have rendered my situation more pitiable.

“Heaven soon sent me a greater satisfaction. I met your son, and attracted him by my gifts, my kind attention, and my friendship. Oh! how many delightful moments has he made me pass. Oh! with what transport did my heart beat when holding him on my knees and fixing my silent looks upon him, I exclaimed, this is Naphtaly's and Rachel's child! In him my wife and brother live re-united. Then pressing him to my bosom, I fancied I was embracing you both; he repaid my caresses and I imagined myself in your arms.

“But this pleasure is passed like the fleet-

ing hours of the morn, and now, my dear brother, I am dying! let us bless the sentence of the Most High—let my death be the price of the happiness of seeing you again, and that happiness will not be purchased too dearly! Why am I not permitted to press my good and virtuous father once more against my bosom? Tell him Ah! tell him or rather conceal my death from him! Open not his wounds again—let him not shed another tear over the child who has already cost him so many! Approach Naphtaly, and you also Rachel, and you, my dear Eleazar, my child, my son, my last friend, come! come and give me your hand! Now join them all of you together and let me place them united upon my heart. Alas! it beats no more; and still, still it loves you Farewell, I die be comforted—be happy—and remember Eleazar!”





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